

## APPENDICES

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## **Appendix A: EPA Internal Control Procedures**

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### **Internal Controls Ensure the Integrity of Survey Data and Results**

The U.S. General Accounting Office and OMB have issued Internal Control Standards that apply to all operations and administrative functions, thus ensuring the quality, reliability and integrity of information we use for decision making. These standards and techniques, found in a number of laws and requirements, apply to the collection, administration and reporting of customer survey results and other forms of data used for performance measurement, verification, planning and management action. Developing internal control procedures is good business practice and important in our role as public servants. What constitutes an effective control system varies with your circumstances. While controls may be as routine as second party reviews or limiting access to the data, they should provide reasonable assurance that you will reliably and cost-effectively accomplish the survey's objectives. Any audits, evaluations or verifications of your data will usually start with an examination of internal control systems.

### **Some Specific Control Standards and Techniques**

Management must provide reasonable assurance and a supportive attitude to protect assets (information) against waste, loss, unauthorized use, and misapplication. Supporting documentation should be clear and available for examination. Management controls should be logical, applicable, reasonably complete, efficient and effective in accomplishing management objectives. Managers and employees must have professional and personal integrity and are obligated to support the ethics program and maintain a level of competence that allows them to accomplish their assigned duties. Managers should ensure that appropriate authority, responsibility, and accountability are defined and delegated and that an appropriate organizational structure is established to effectively carry out program responsibilities. Managers should spread key duties and responsibilities in authorizing, processing, recording, and reviewing official information to avoid concentration of power and to discourage abuse of authority. Access to assets and records should be secured and limited to authorized personnel, with custody assigned and maintained. All program operations, obligations and costs should be in compliance with applicable laws and regulations; resources should be used efficiently and duly authorized.



## **Appendix B(i): Sampling – The Basics**

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If you have decided to use a survey approach for obtaining customer feedback, you need to determine what sample size to use. This Appendix first discusses sample sizes, sampling error, and confidence intervals — all of which factor into decisions about the sample size. It then presents a table for determining sample sizes — and tells you step by step how to use the table. You will also learn how to randomly select customers for the survey.

### ***What Kinds of Sample Sizes Are We Talking About?***

Before we give specific guidelines on how to choose the sample size, we should set some general expectations. National public opinion polls like the Gallup Poll and the Roper Poll typically use sample sizes of 1,350 to 1,800. These polls use fairly large sample sizes to obtain a result that represents the entire adult U.S. population, with a sampling error of plus or minus 2.5 to 3 percent. Such small sampling errors are needed because the polls often address matters of national importance. The decisions made, based in part on the results of these national polls, may be far-reaching, long-lasting, and affect millions of people.

Your surveys to obtain customer feedback will be very different. The target group whose opinions you need will be much smaller: the people who have come to one specific program within a limited time (e.g., during one year) to request certain products or services. Your target group may be as large as 500 to 1,000 people (few EPA programs directly serve more customers than that) or as small as 50 people or fewer. Furthermore, although the decisions based on customer feedback are important, they will probably not be far-reaching and long-lasting. In most cases, you will be asking these types of questions:

- Should we change a process to reflect customer comments?
- Should we revise some of our written products?
- Should we provide a half day of customer feedback training to each staff member?

Even if we make the wrong decision based on a customer survey, we should discover our error soon enough and be able to correct it without irreparable damage.

Based on these considerations, we can tolerate higher sampling errors than those associated with national surveys like the Gallup poll. We can feel comfortable with sampling errors of 5 percent or even 10 percent.

Additionally, you have relatively small target groups who were served by a specific program during a defined time period. For this reason, you can use a much smaller sample size than is used in the Gallup and Roper polls, which seek to accurately capture the opinions of millions of people.

## **Sampling Error**

“Sampling error” is normally presented as a percentage with a plus or minus sign in front of it. For example, the sampling error in one particular situation may be  $\pm 3.5$  percent. That means that the *true* value of a given measure for the entire population—that is, the whole target group you are getting feedback from—is the value obtained from your sample of customers, plus or minus 3.5 percent. If for example, 62.4 percent of your sampled customers are satisfied, the actual percentage of satisfied customers lies between 58.9 percent (62.4 percent - 3.5 percent) and 65.9 percent (62.4 percent + 3.5 percent).

But that is not quite true. In fact, there is no reasonable sample size through which we can be certain that we will obtain the true value for all customers.

Why is that so?

The characteristics of the customers in the sample may occasionally be very different from the characteristics of the customers not in the sample. In such circumstances, the true value for all customers will be very different from the value obtained from the customers surveyed. The only way to get around this statistical fact is to specify “how certain we want to be” that the true value does, in fact, fall within a specific range. This degree of certainty is known as the “confidence level.”

### **Confidence Level**

The “confidence level” indicates how confident we want to be that the true value lies within a specific range.

No one confidence level is the “right” one to use. There are many different possible confidence levels, and only you can decide which confidence level is appropriate for your survey.

Many public opinion surveys use the 95 percent confidence level. That means that you can be 95 percent certain that the true value for all your customers will lie within a specific percentage band (one equal to the size of the sampling error) around the result you obtain from your sample.

Another confidence level commonly used is the 90 percent confidence level. With a 90 percent confidence interval, you can be confident that 9 times out of 10, the true value falls within the value obtained from your sample of customers, plus or minus the sampling error. Some analysts use 80 percent confidence intervals.

To decide what confidence level to use, you might want to think of a scale running from 80 to 95, where 95 represents a high level of confidence and 80 represents a lower level of confidence. Decide which confidence level to use based on the way you will use your results, how products and services may be affected by the results, and the frequency with which you will collect additional information to confirm or revise your findings.

### ***Determining the Sample Size***

Now that we have established appropriate expectations with regard to sampling error and sample size, we will provide you with some guidance on selecting your sample size. Please recognize that there are several factors to consider in determining the sample size. The information provided here is intended to help get you started. Please refer as well to the additional information provided in Appendix B(i) and Appendix B(ii). If you wish, you may also consult a statistician at EPA. A list of EPA statisticians showing the EPA Office in which each of these statisticians is located can be obtained from the Office of the Chief Statistician of EPA within EPA's Center for Environmental Information and Statistics by calling 202-260-5244.

Number in Target Group	Sampling Error	Confidence Level	Sample Size
1000	±5	80	141
1000	±5	90	214
1000	±5	95	278
500	±5	80	124
500	±5	90	176
500	±5	95	218
200	±5	80	90
200	±5	90	116
200	±5	95	132
100	±5	80	62
100	±5	90	74
100	±5	95	80
50	±5	80	39
50	±5	90	43
50	±5	95	45
1000	±10	80	39
1000	±10	90	64
1000	±10	95	88
500	±10	80	38

500	±10	90	60
500	±10	95	81
200	±10	80	34
200	±10	90	51
200	±10	95	66
100	±10	80	29
100	±10	90	41
100	±10	95	50
50	±10	80	23
50	±10	90	29
50	±10	95	34

The above table is appropriate for *simple random sampling* (SRS), which is a sampling procedure based on sampling without replacement. Simple random sampling is the most commonly used sampling procedure. The table is based on the *approximate formula* given in Appendix B(ii). This approximate formula includes an adjustment comparable to the finite population correction factor for each combination of target population and sample size.

The *precise formula* that can be used instead of this *approximate formula* is also given in Appendix B(ii). For a discussion of the *finite population correction factor*, see Appendix B(ii).

The procedure described below for randomly selecting a sample from the full list of customers served in a specific period of time is *simple random sampling* and is therefore consistent with the above table.

### ***Here's How to Use the Above Table***

The instructions that follow assume that your survey's unit of analysis will be the "person served."

- (1) Identify the number of persons you have served in a given time period. Find that number in the column labeled "Number in Target Group."
- (2) Select the confidence level that you consider to be the most appropriate given the magnitude of the decisions that will be made:
  - ▶ If the decisions to be made using the survey results will be far-reaching, long-lasting and/or costly, use the 95 percent confident level.
  - ▶ If the decisions to be made using the survey results will be less far-reaching, less long-lasting



or less costly, use the 90 percent confidence level.

- ▶ If the decisions to be made using the survey results will have more limited consequences, mostly in the short-term (e.g., in the next 6-12 months) and the cost implications of the decisions will be moderate, you may use the 80 percent confidence level.

(3) Select an appropriate sampling error:

- ▶ For most EPA customer satisfaction surveys, a sampling error of  $\pm 10\%$  should be acceptable.
- ▶ In cases where the decisions will require greater certainty and precision, a sampling error of  $\pm 5\%$  can be used instead.

(4) Read off the corresponding sample size.

- ▶ If the total number of customers falls between two of the values shown above in the column “Number in Target Group,” you can use interpolation to obtain an initial estimate of the appropriate sample size.
- ▶ You can then use the approximate formula for determining sample size presented in Appendix B(ii) to obtain a much better estimate of sample size needed.
- ▶ You can stop here and use *the approximate sample size* obtained in step (4)(b) immediately above. Or, if you wish, you can use *the trial and error approach* described in Appendix B(ii), or even better, *the combined approach*, also presented in Appendix B(ii), to calculate *the precise value for the sample size* needed.

### ***Here’s How to Randomly Select a Sample of Customers Once You Have Determined What Sample Size to Use***

Once you have determined the appropriate sample size, you need to randomly select that number of customers from the total number served in the time period of interest. Here is a procedure you can use to make that random selection:

- (1) Make a complete list of all the persons served in the period of interest for which you already have (or can obtain, with a reasonable expenditure of effort) the needed contact information (i.e., name, plus address or phone number). Put the customers in alphabetical order. Eliminate duplicates (so that each name appears only once).
- (2) Starting at the top of the list, number each name. The result is the “*master list*” of customers served. The number next to each name is that person’s “customer number.”
- (3) Here is a computer-based approach for selecting a sample of customers from the *master list*:

- (a) You will use spreadsheet software (such as Lotus 1-2-3 or Excel) to carry out the remaining steps of this procedure. Before you begin using any particular spreadsheet software, make sure it has a “randomize” function. Not all spreadsheets do.
- (b) Enter the customer numbers in the second column of the spreadsheet, placing the numbers in numerical order, one number per row. Leave the first column blank. You should have a spreadsheet with the number of rows equal to the number of customers. In the second column you should have the numbers “1”, “2”, “3”, and so on (up to the total number of customers served).
- (c) Use the “randomize” function on the second column of the spreadsheet. The numbers in the second column are now in random order.
- (d) Enter numbers into the first column of each row. Enter the number “1” into this column in the first row, enter “2” in the second row, and so on. These new numbers are the row labels.
- (e) Mark off the number of rows corresponding to the sample size chosen above. For example, if the sample size is 65, mark off the first 65 rows.
- (f) The numbers appearing in the second column are the customer numbers for your sample. Using the master list prepared in step (2) above, read off the names next to these customer numbers. Place these names in a new list. These are the people you will contact to answer the survey questions.
- (g) Later, if you have a low response rate to your survey despite reasonable follow-up efforts, go back to the spreadsheet and mark off the additional number of rows needed to reach the desired sample size. The numbers appearing in the second column of these additional rows are the customer numbers for the additional customers to be added to the sample.

## Appendix B(ii): Sampling – More on Sample Size

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### ***The Effect of the Response Rate on Sample Size***

The *initial sample size* is the number of customers you attempt to contact during the survey. The *final sample size* is the actual number of customers for which responses were received. The *response rate* is the percentage of customers included in the initial sample for which a usable response was received. The response rate will vary depending on the kinds of customers being contacted, the kind of product or service received, the kinds of questions asked in the survey, and so on.

The response rate is almost always less than 100 percent. The table in Appendix B(i) shows the approximate sampling error associated with the *final* sample size. You should always include a greater number of customers in *the initial sample* to achieve the desired final sample size.

For *periodic surveys* that ask the same or similar questions (in order to measure changes in customer satisfaction) you can estimate response rates based on rates in previous surveys. If you are conducting your survey for the first time, you could assume a response rate of, say, 85 percent when determining how many customers to select for the initial sample. If fewer than 85 percent respond, you can add more customers to the sample later, using the procedure described in step (3) (g) in on pages 5-6 of Appendix B(i).

Note, however, that it's better to have high response rates and among a smaller number of customers in the sample. The reason for this is *non-response bias*. Non-response bias is encountered if the customers who did not respond to the survey are significantly different from those who did respond. Non-response may be due to your inability to reach a specific customer, (e.g., because his or her telephone number has changed), or may be due to the customer's unwillingness to participate in the survey at all, or to answer one or more questions in the survey. Because some customers will answer some questions but not others, the degree of non-response will vary from question to question on the survey questionnaire.

Non-response bias is one source of the overall bias in the survey results. Another source of bias is using a poorly chosen or poorly constructed master list from which we randomly select the sample of people to be surveyed. One of the best known examples of such bias is a classic national poll of likely voters that was conducted by the Literary Digest in 1936, a few days before the presidential election that year. The poll showed that Alf Landon would win the election. In fact, Franklin Roosevelt won the election by a landslide. The reason for the erroneous polling results was bias. The poll was conducted relying primarily on lists of telephone subscribers. Since 1936 was the lowest point of the Great Depression, many voters could not afford phone service. It turned out that voters without phones were much more likely to vote for Franklin Roosevelt than those who had them.

While this particular case gives an unusually dramatic example of bias, any level of non-response (like any serious systematic errors in preparing the master list) poses potentially serious problems. Furthermore, we won't know the magnitude of these problems because we probably won't know how the non-respondents differ from those who did respond. After all, we were never able to gather any information about them in our survey.

For this reason, you should keep non-response rates to the lowest achievable levels. You can do this by following up with customers who didn't respond to your first attempt. Only after you've made all reasonable follow-up efforts should you make up the shortfall by selecting additional customers.

### An Adjustment Factor

The sampling errors shown in the table presented in Appendix B(i) are approximate. They do not take into account a factor that, if considered, would result in lower values. We will now provide you with an adjustment factor that you may use to account for this additional factor and, in so doing, obtain a more precise value for the sampling error:

*An adjustment factor to reflect that the sample result was greater than or less than 50 percent*

One significant complication is that the sampling error varies markedly with the magnitude of the sampling result obtained. By *sampling result*, we mean, for example, the percentage of customers in the sample who say they are satisfied with the product or service they received. All else being equal, the *largest* sampling error is associated with a degree of satisfaction of exactly 50 percent. Any higher or lower level of satisfaction will result in a *lower* sampling error. The lowest sampling error is associated with a level of satisfaction of 100 percent or 0 percent.

Here are the specific correction factors you should use for various sample results:

The Sample Result (e.g., the percentage  
of customers in the sample who said they  
were satisfied with the product or  
serviced received)

Correction factor

99%	.....	0.20
98%	.....	0.28
95%	.....	0.44
90%	.....	0.60
80%	.....	0.80
70%	.....	0.92
60%	.....	0.98
50%	.....	1.00 (i.e., no correction)
40%	.....	0.98
30%	.....	0.92
20%	.....	0.80
10%	.....	0.60
5%	.....	0.44
2%	.....	0.28

1% ..... 0.20

Thus, if the survey shows that 90 percent of the customers sampled were satisfied with the product or service they received, then the associated sampling error is obtained by multiplying 0.60 times the sampling error shown in the standard tables (including the table provided in Appendix B(i). So if the sampling error shown in the table is  $\pm 10\%$  for the sample size used, then the actual sampling error is really only  $\pm 6\%$  ( $= \pm 10\% \times 0.60$ ).

If the sample result shows that 80% of the customers were satisfied, and the sampling error obtained from the table was  $\pm 10\%$ , the actual sampling error associated with that specific sampling error would be  $\pm 8\%$  ( $= \pm 10\% \times 0.80$ ). These are rather significant adjustments.

Since the levels of satisfaction likely to be obtained for most EPA products and services are likely to be in the range of 80 to 90 percent or more [questionable assumption?], we advise you to take this adjustment factor into consideration: (1) when calculating sample sizes , and (2) when determining the actual sampling error associated with a given survey result.

There is a major implication of this variation in sampling error. Since the *sample result* varies from question to question, there is no one level of *sampling error* associated with the survey as a whole. Instead, you will have a different sampling error for each for the response to each question. If customer satisfaction is close to 50 percent on one question and close to 100 percent on another, the sampling error for the second will be much lower than (possibly less than half of) the sampling error for the first. The plus or minus figure given should therefore be different for each result reported (i.e., it should be different for each question for which the response is shown). It is common practice, however, for only one level of sampling error to be shown: this may either be (1) the largest sampling error associated with any of the results reported or (2) the sampling error that would be obtained in the worst possible case, i.e., if the result had been a level of satisfaction of 50%.

In presenting the results for customer satisfaction surveys conducted at EPA, those preparing the results may either conform to this common practice or present question-specific sampling errors, as they prefer. The latter can be accomplished by simply stating a plus or minus figure after each sample result shown.

For example:

The Question on the Survey for Which the Result Is Being Reported	The Degree of Satisfaction Reported
Question 1	83% $\pm$ 8%
Question 2	91% $\pm$ 6%
Question 3	78% $\pm$ 9%

Question 4	87% ± 8%
Question 5	94% ± 5%

### ***Precise Formula for Calculating the Sampling Error***

Here is an alternative approach for (1) estimating the sampling error that will occur in a planned survey or (2) calculating the actual sampling error associated with a specific result in a completed survey. Instead of obtaining values of the sampling error from a table (like that included in Appendix B(i)) and then applying the necessary adjustment factor(s) presented above in the previous section, simply calculate the sampling error directly from the precise formula.

Here is the precise formula for calculating the sampling error:

$$\text{The sampling error} = (Z) \text{ times the square root of } \frac{p \times q}{n} \times \frac{N - n}{N - 1}$$

where p = the sample result (i.e., the percentage of customers who were satisfied with the product or service they received)

q = 1 - p

n = the sample size

N = the total number of customers served

Z = is a constant coefficient (i.e., multiplier) associated with the confidence level used. (This must be looked up in a table in a statistics book). Each of these constants is known as the Z-score for that confidence level.

Here are the coefficients (i.e., Z-scores) for the three confidence levels:

For the 95% confidence level, Z = 1.90

For the 90% confidence level, Z = 1.645

For the 80% confidence level, Z = 1.282

The precise formula presented above is based on the simple random sampling (SRS) procedure, in which the sample is drawn using the sampling without replacement procedure. Simple random sampling is the most commonly used sampling procedure for use in customer satisfaction surveys

conducted by EPA. It is the procedure reflected in the table and the discussion of sample selection presented in Appendix B(i).

The above formula will give the exact size of the sampling error for any combination of number of customers served, sample size, sample result and confidence level. Using this formula automatically takes into account the differences in the magnitude of the sampling error due to differences in the sample result (which was discussed in the previous section of this Appendix) and also automatically includes the finite population correction factor, which is discussed in the next section of this Appendix.

### ***Another Adjustment Factor***

The table presented in Appendix B(i) reflects both the sample size (n) and the total number of customers served (N) in determining the sampling error for any given confidence level you select. If you consult reference books on statistics or sampling procedures, you may find tables that show sampling errors for various sample sizes without factoring in the total number of customers served. In such cases, to get the actual sampling error, you must multiply the sampling error given by an additional factor known as the finite population correction factor.

The standard sampling techniques were developed for sampling a very large number of people. This is true, for example, of surveys of national public opinion. The standard formulas and tables used are therefore predicated on sampling from a very large pool, one that is, in practical terms, “as good as infinite” and is treated by statisticians as though it were infinite.

When the number of people in the target group is much smaller, you should use a correction factor (one known as the *finite population correction factor*) to correct for this circumstance. The finite population correction factor can always be used (its use never gives an incorrect result), but you generally don’t need it if your sample size is less than about 10 percent of your target group.

If the sample size of customers to be contacted is greater than 10 percent of the total number of customers served, then you should use the finite population correction factor in calculating the sampling error. These circumstances will apply in a large percentage of customer satisfaction surveys conducted by EPA. Luckily, the finite population correction factor always results in a lower sampling error. Therefore, if you are satisfied with the sampling error calculated without using the finite population correction factor, then there is no *need* to use it for that survey, unless you want to know exactly how much lower the true sampling error is.

The finite population correction factor (FPCF) can be calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{FPCF} = \text{the square root of } \frac{(N-n)}{(N-1)}$$

where: N = the total number of customers served

n = the number of customers in the sample (i.e., the sample size)

The corrected sampling error is obtained by multiplying the finite population correction factor by the sampling error obtained from a standard table that considered only sample size and confidence level (and did not consider the size of *the target group* (i.e., *the total population*)). The adjustment factor becomes more significant as you increase the percentage of the target population you sample. See the following table:

Sample Size as a Fraction (Percentage)  
of the Size of the Target Population  
= n/N

Approximate Value of the  
Finite Population Correction Factor

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10% .....	0.95
20% .....	0.89
40% .....	0.77
50% .....	0.71
60% .....	0.63
70% .....	0.55
75% .....	0.50

As can be seen from the above table, if the *sample size* is approximately 10 percent of the *target group*, then the correction factor is approximately 0.95. Thus, when you sample 10 percent of your customers, the sampling error will be reduced to 95 percent of what it otherwise would have been (i.e., the sampling error would be reduced from  $\pm 10$  percent to  $\pm 9.5$  percent).

If you sample 20 percent of the target group, then the correction factor is approximately 0.89 — reducing the sampling error to 89 percent of what it otherwise would have been (e.g., the sampling error would be reduced from  $\pm 10$  percent to  $\pm 8.9$  percent).

If you sample 50 percent of the target group, then the adjustment factor will be approximately 0.71 — reducing the sampling error to 71 percent of what it otherwise would have been (e.g., the sampling error would be reduced from  $\pm 10$  percent to  $\pm 7.1$  percent).

There is a general rule of thumb used by many statisticians: the finite population correction factor should be applied whenever the sample size is 10 percent or more of the target group from which the sample is to be drawn.



Note, however, that using the finite population correction factor will always give you a more accurate value for the sampling error. Therefore, you should never be reluctant to use it. Under certain circumstances (i.e., when the sample size is less than 10 percent of the target population), you can disregard it (i.e., not apply it) without placing undue adverse effect on the estimated size of the sampling error.

Note also that the last element in *the precise formula for calculating sampling error* given in the previous section of this Appendix is the finite population correction factor. By using that precise formula, you can ensure that the finite population correction factor is automatically taken into account when determining the size of the sampling error.

One final technical note: you may have noticed the second column in the table above is labeled the *approximate value* of the finite population correction factor. The factors are not exact because we used the following approximation to calculate the values shown in the second column:

Instead of using the precise formula for the finite population correction factor:

$$\text{FPCF} = \text{the square root of } \frac{N - n}{N - 1}$$

The following approximate formula was used:

$$\text{FPCF} = (\text{approx}) = \text{square root of } \frac{N - n}{N}$$

For most values of N (the size of the target population), the difference between the true value obtained from the precise formula and the approximate value obtained from the approximate formula is very small.

### ***A Trial and Error Procedure and An Approximate Formula for Determining Sample Size***

You can use the *precise formula* given above to determine the *sampling error* for any combination of confidence level, number of customers served, and sample size. You can use that same formula to determine *sample size* when you know the desired confidence level, the desired maximum level of sampling error and the number of customers served. Unfortunately, you can't use it directly to obtain sample size in such situations. This is because sample size (n) appears two different places in the equation, and the equation can't be rearranged to solve directly for sample size. Instead, you must use the precise formula indirectly to determine the needed sample size. You can do so as follows:

(1) Begin by guessing what the needed value of the sample size is. (*Any* guess will do as a starting point, although the closer to the true value your guess turns out to be, the sooner you will be finished.)

(2) Use that value of the sampling size (i.e., your initial guess) to solve the precise formula equation for sampling error.

(3)(a) If the value of sampling error you obtain from the formula is *less than* the maximum sampling error you are willing to accept, then you should *decrease* your sample size and solve the equation again.

(3)(b) If the value of sampling error you obtain from the formula is *greater than* the maximum sampling error you are willing to accept, then you should *increase* your sample size and solve the equation again.

(4) Continue steps (3)(a) and (3)(b) above until you arrive at the appropriate sample size for the sampling error you are willing to accept.

#### *The Approximate Formula for Determining Sample Size*

The trial and error approach described above will always give you the best possible value for sample size. However, the process for arriving at that value can be rather tedious. For this reason, you may want to use an *approximate formula* that will give you a sampling error close to the one you would get from the trial-and-error procedure. This approximate formula needs only to be solved once – no repeated calculations are needed. However, you will, in most cases, obtain a larger sample size than you would get from the trial and error procedure. That is, the approximate formula will give you a *larger* sample size than you need to achieve your target sampling error.

Here is the approximate formula:

$$n = \frac{N \times Z^2}{[4 \times (N - 1) \times E^2] + [Z^2]}$$

Where:

n = sample size

N = number of customers served (from which the sample is to be drawn)

E = the maximum acceptable level of sampling error, expressed as a decimal fraction (e.g., 5% = 0.05)

$Z$  = the Z-score corresponding to the confidence level selected (this can be obtained from most standard statistics references, including most basic statistics textbooks). The Z-scores for the 80%, 90% and 95% confidence levels are given above in this Appendix in conjunction with the *precise formula*.

### *A Combined Approach*

You can, if you wish, make use of *both* the approximate formula *and* the trial and error approach given above. Begin by using the approximate formula to get an approximate value for the sample size. Then use this approximate value as your first guess for sample size in the trial and error approach, and proceed from there with the trial and error approach as above.

This *combined approach* will allow you to come up with the lowest possible sample size with the least amount of effort.

### **Why is So Much Attention Given to Sample Size?**

Much of Appendix B(i) and all of this Appendix have been devoted to considerations related to sample size. Why, you might ask, do people spend so much time worrying about sample size?

If you use a larger sample size than you need, you will incur greater costs and impose a greater burden on your customers than needed.

- The extra costs alone can be quite considerable. Let's consider a hypothetical telephone survey. For each extra customer in the sample, you have to spend additional time conducting the telephone interview, following up with those who did not answer the first time, following up with those who did not initially agree to participate, and so on. It also means more data to be recorded and analyzed.
- The extra burden on your customers' time also can be quite large when you add up the total time spent by all customers surveyed.

If the sample size used turns out to be *greater* than was needed, then the extra cost incurred and the extra burden imposed were wasted.

On the other hand, if you use too *small* a sample size, then you may have greater uncertainty about the true satisfaction of your customers (because the sampling error was so large). You were uncertain about their degree of satisfaction before (that's why you decided to conduct the survey) and you may now find that your level of uncertainty afterward is not much reduced. In this case, the whole cost of conducting the survey may prove to have been wasted.

Keep in mind that any wasted time and dollars could otherwise have been used to improve the products or services you provide to your customer. So you want to *choose the smallest possible sample size that will give you a level of sampling error that you can live with*. The results should be precise enough to give you the degree of certainty you need about: (1) the true current level of satisfaction of your customers and (2) how their degree of satisfaction has been changing over time — as a result of your continuing efforts to improve products and services.

## **Appendix C: How to Obtain Clearance for EPA Customer Satisfaction Surveys**

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### ***QUESTION 1: WHO CAN USE THE CUSTOMER SERVICE ICR?***

According to OMB's Resource Manual for Customer Surveys (dated October 1993) and other relevant guidance documents, the generic clearance shall be used for "strictly voluntary collections of opinion information from clients that have experience with the program that is the subject of each data collection" and precludes this option for use by regulatory agencies to survey regulated entities<sup>1</sup>

- in any situation where a respondent may perceive that a response will result in risks to his interests through potential penalties or loss of benefits
- for collecting factual information (other than simple identifying information, where needed)
- for collecting data from the general public

### ***QUESTION 2: HOW DO I OBTAIN APPROVAL FOR MY SURVEY, IF IT MEETS THE CONDITIONS OUTLINED ABOVE?***

Prior to initiating the survey, sponsoring programs must seek final approval from OMB. To obtain approval, sponsoring programs must submit a clearance package consisting of a memorandum and a copy of the survey instrument through Regulatory Information Division (RID). The memorandum will be addressed from the program or office director to the RID Desk Officer at, Office of Policy, (2136). The memorandum must address the following<sup>2</sup>:

- Survey title, identification of survey originator (office, point of contact, phone number)
- Description and intended purpose of the survey as it relates to EPA customers
- Methodology and use of anticipated results
- Collection schedule, follow-up plans
- Costs and burden to the Agency and respondents, and the number of respondents

The memorandum will vary in length and detail, depending on the complexity of the survey. IPS staff will review each submission to ensure that it meets the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act

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<sup>1</sup>EPA interprets this to preclude any EPA surveys conducted fact finding for the purposes of regulatory development or enforcement.

<sup>2</sup>For customer feedback forms and short questionnaires, a one-page memorandum should be sufficient. Mail or telephone surveys making use of statistical sampling must include statistician's name/phone, and a brief design, precision requirements, and pretests/pilot tests.

and any conditions of the generic approval. They may reject any proposed customer survey that does not meet the criteria above. In the methodological issues, the program shall solicit Agency statistical experts through EPA's Statistical Policy Branch or program office to make any final determinations as to the statistical validity of the customer survey.

### ***QUESTION 3: HOW LONG WILL THE PROCESS TAKE?***

Following review within RID, RID will submit surveys and attached materials to OMB for a 10 working-day review.

### ***WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?***

Sponsoring organizations within the EPA should maintain records according to each survey schedule. In general, survey results should be maintained for three years or until after follow-up has been performed.

Sponsoring offices are encouraged to provide feedback to RID on the success of their surveys (through a memo, or summary report). That information may be shared with fledgling customer survey programs within other parts of the EPA. Feedback might include:

- 1) response rates, follow-up strategies, important lessons related to survey design and implementation
- 2) general trends established from analysis of data
- 3) changes to the organization as a result of the survey
- 4) points of contact for questions about the survey

### ***EXAMPLE OF BURDEN STATEMENT FOR FORMS OR SURVEY***

The OMB Control Number and expiration date must appear on the front page of an OMB-approved form or survey, or on the first screen viewed by the respondent for an on-line application. The rest of the burden statement must be included somewhere on the form, questionnaire or other collection of information, or in the instructions for such collection.

Explain the reasons the information is planned to be and/or has been collected, and the way such information is planned to be and/or has been used to further the proper performance of the functions of the agency. (See the requirements of Executive Order 12862 below for ideas.) State whether responses are voluntary, required to obtain or retain a benefit (citing authority), or mandatory (citing authority), and the nature and extent of confidentiality to be provided, if any (citing authority).

The following information must appear on the first page of the survey:

Form Approved OMB Control No. xxxx-xxxx. Approval expires MM/DD/YY.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average X minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering information, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments on the Agency's need for this information, the accuracy of the provided burden estimates, and any suggestions for reducing the burden, including the use of automated collection techniques to the Director, OPPE Regulatory Information Division, United States Environmental Protection Agency (Mail Code 2137), 401 M Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20460; and to the Office of Information & Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management & Budget, 725 17th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20503, Attention: Desk Officer for EPA. Include the EPA ICR number and the OMB control number in any correspondence.

### ***CUSTOMER SERVICE EXECUTIVE ORDER (12862) REQUIREMENTS***

- Identify customers who are or should be receiving EPA service
- Survey customers for the kind/quality of services they want, their level of satisfaction with the services, and whether standards are set for what matters to them
- Develop, post and implement standards
- Measure results against them
- Report annually to customers on progress toward achieving standards
- Integrate customer service standards, measurement and tracking with reinvention, planning, budgeting (GPRA), operating plans, regulations and guidelines, training and personnel classification and evaluation
- Recognize employees for meeting and exceeding customer service standards
- Benchmark customer service performance against the best in business
- Survey front-line employees on barriers to, and ideas for, matching the best in business
- Provide customers with choices in sources of service and methods
- Make information, services and complaints systems easily available
- Address customer complaints

- Develop cross-media (within agency) and cross-Agency programs to serve shared customer groups
- Take advantage of new technology to better serve customers

**Following are examples of successful applications to OMB.**

Sample #1

<p align="center"><b>U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY REGION I OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MEASUREMENT &amp; EVALUATION 60 WESTVIEW STREET, LEXINGTON, MA 02173-3185</b></p>	
<p><b>MEMORANDUM</b></p>	
<b>DATE:</b>	June 12, 1997
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Request for OMB Approval of Customer Feedback Survey
<b>FROM:</b>	Carol Wood, Manager Ecosystems Assessment Branch
<b>TO:</b>	Barbara Willis, RID Desk Officer Regulatory Information Division Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation
<p>EPA's Region 1, New England Office is preparing to distribute copies of the <i>1997 State of the New England Environment Report</i>. In order to learn whether the report is clear, easy to read and provides information that our customers need, we are preparing a customer feedback survey to include with the report. A copy of the survey form is attached.</p> <p>Approximately 12,000 copies of the report will be distributed to EPA personnel, citizens, local, state and federal offices out side the EPA Region 1 Office, with the survey form as an insert. We expect to receive approximately 3,000 responses. Region I will create a database to track survey form responses. The information will be used to prepare a report which will summarize the findings and make recommendations on how to improve the next <i>State of the New England Environment Report</i> and our other outreach activities.</p> <p>We will be receiving the reports from the Government Printing Office by June 24 and hope to receive approval for the customer survey form and have the forms ready to include in the mailings.</p> <p>If you have any questions or concerns about this request, please contact Diane Switzer at 617-860-4377 or me at 617-860-4316.</p> <p>Attachments</p>	



## Sample #1 - Continued

### Request for Approval of Information Collection Activity

#### I. Background

The *1997 State of the New England Environment Report* is an outreach tool, designed to inform the public on environmental conditions, using indicators that have been selected in the National and Regional processes as we begin focusing more on environmental results. We discuss topics of concern to the public and EPA, signs of improvement or degradation, and what EPA and our partners are doing to improve conditions. The purpose of this outreach activity is to provide clear and concise information to the public that meets their informational needs and allows them to better understand what we are doing to improve and protect the environment and public health. The discussion topics are selected based upon regional priorities and what we think the public wants to know.

#### II. Survey Purpose and Description

The State of the New England Environment Workgroup is planning to conduct a customer feedback survey in the form of a "Reader's Evaluation Form," to evaluate whether we are providing the public with the information they want and need in a way that is easy to read and use. The results will be used to improve the report's content, readability and use.

The evaluation consists of six questions. The first question will evaluate the reports readability. The second question evaluates how well we do in communicating information the public wants to know. The third question evaluates how the information is useful to the reader. The fourth and fifth questions evaluate the information needs of the reader that we are not meeting. The sixth question evaluates whether the report is something the public wants to receive.

#### III. Survey Methodology and Use of Results

The potential target audience for the evaluation forms consists of approximately 12,000 citizens, businesses and government personnel (local, state and national). EPA Region I plans to distribute the forms as inserts to copies of the *1997 State of the New England Environment Report*. Through this effort, we anticipate that approximately 3,000 readers will respond. We estimate that it will take a respondent approximately five minutes to complete an evaluation form.

EPA Region I will create a database to track evaluation form responses. The information will be used to prepare a report which will summarize the findings and make recommendations to the State of the New England Environment Workgroup and Regional managers on how to improve the readability, use and content of this report and other similar outreach activities.

#### **IV. Respondents' Burden**

Number of Respondents	3,000
Minutes per Response	5 minutes x 3,000 = 15,000 minutes = 250 hours
Cost per Hour	\$11.00*
<b>Total Burden:</b>	<b>250 Hours; \$2,750</b>

\* Based on Federal/State/Local Employment & Payroll averages as presented in the 1996 Statistical Abstract of the United States

#### **V. Agency Burden**

EPA Staff Time	100 hours
Cost per Hour	\$36.00
<b>Total Burden</b>	<b>100 hours; \$3,600.00</b>

## Sample #1 - Continued

YOUR COMMENTS, PLEASE . . .

We would like to know if the **1997 State of the New England Environment Report** provides you with use useful information. Your responses to the following questions will help us meet your needs.

1. a. Is this report easy to read and understand? Yes ☐ No ☐  
b. What would make the report easier to read and use?

2. Please rate the report as to how informative the discussions within each of the sections are, with 1 = not informative and 5 = very informative.

<u>Report Section</u>	<u>Not Informative</u>					<u>Very Informative</u>				
a. New England Ecosystems	1	2	3	4	5					
b. Public Health & Our Environment	1	2	3	4	5					
c. Economic Opportunities	1	2	3	4	5					
d. Recreational Resources	1	2	3	4	5					
e. Environmental Education & Outreach	1	2	3	4	5					
f. New Directions	1	2	3	4	5					

3. In which areas is the report helpful to you? ☐ School ☐ Work ☐ Home  
☐ Leisure Time ☐ Local Community ☐ General Knowledge ☐ Other

4. What topic(s) would you like to see in future reports?

5. We welcome any other comments you have about this report:

6. Would you like to receive a copy of future reports? Yes ☐ No ☐  
If "Yes," please provide your mailing address:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Town/City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Please fold in half with EPA's return address on the outside, staple/tape shut, and mail.

**Thank you for your response!    Environmental Protection Agency    Region I, New England Office**

## Sample #1- continued

June 18, 1997	
<b><u>MEMORANDUM</u></b>	
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Review of Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire, ICR No. 1711.01 (OMB 2090-0019)
<b>FROM:</b>	Barbara N. Willis Regulatory Information Division (2136)
<b>To:</b>	Chris Wolz Natural Resources, OIRA
<p>As a condition of OMB approval for the generic ICR, EPA agreed to submit each specific questionnaire covered by this clearance to OMB for review. Therefore I am forwarding for your review Region I "1997 State of the New England Environmental Report". The purpose of this survey is to evaluate whether Region I is providing the public with the information they want and need in a way that is easy to read and use. The results will be used to improve the reports' content, readability and use.</p> <p>Your comments and suggestions would be much appreciated. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. If you have any questions, please contact me at (202) 260-9453.</p> <p>Attachments</p>	

## Sample # 2

<b><u>MEMORANDUM</u></b>	
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Submittal of Customer Satisfaction Survey for Expedited OMB Review
<b>FROM:</b>	Michael B. Cook, Director
<b>TO:</b>	Matt Leopard, RID Desk Officer Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation (2136)
<p>Attached is a clearance package for an Office of Water Customer Satisfaction Survey as authorized under Executive Order 12862, "Setting Customer Service Standards." This particular survey is designed to assess state opinion on the current level of satisfaction and desired improvements to the Agency's Water grant process. This voluntary survey focuses on three of the primary water quality management grants under the Clean Water Act, Sections 106, 319 and 604 (b).</p> <p>We are requesting an expedited review for this survey instrument in order to comply with the rather tight schedule that is mandated under the Executive Order. We anticipate initiating the survey no later than mid-November. I am requesting your assistance in coordinating this review.</p> <p>Please contact Jane Ephremides of my staff (260-5835), or Don Brady in the Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds (260-7074) if you have any questions.</p> <p>Attachment</p> <p>cc: Bob Wayland Abby Pirnie Don Brady</p>	

## Sample #2 - continued

### **CLEARANCE INFORMATION COLLECTION REQUEST FOR 1994 THE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY**

#### **Identification of Information Collection**

Executive Order 12862 requires Agencies to “survey customers to determine the kind and quality of services they want and their level of satisfaction with existing services”. This survey, will be conducted by customer satisfaction survey professionals at the request of the Environmental Protection Agency’s Office of Wastewater Management’ Resource Management and Evaluation Staff and the Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds Assessment and Watershed Protection Division. Tim Icke, Program Analyst, will be the point of contact at OWOW’s Assessment and Watershed Protection Division. He can be reached at (202)-260-2640.

#### **Short Characterization of the Survey**

The 1994 Customer Satisfaction Survey will solicit opinions from members of the grants community within the States. The data collection is authorized by Executive Order Number 12862, “Setting Customer Service Standards,” which requires all federal executive departments and agencies that provide significant services directly to the public to carry out the principles of the National Performance Review.

As a result of the Executive Order, The Office of Water is assessing its operations and procedures in order to provide service to the public that matches or exceeds the best service available in the private sector. The Customer Satisfaction Survey applies to three of the grants, those under Sections 106, 319, and 604(b) of the Clean Water Act. The survey is intended to determine the customers’ current level of satisfaction and desired improvements in these three grant programs. In the water program, there are 11 sources of financial assistance available to assist the states and territories in achieving the mandates of the Clean Water Act. The questions focus on respondents’ opinions and perceptions of services rendered.

#### **Collection Methodology**

Using a pretested telephone questionnaire, EPA will survey State water quality managers, grants administration managers, and the program managers for Sections 106, 319, and 604(b) in each of the 57 States and territories. EPA estimates that the number of respondents will vary considerably from state to state. Using a conservative estimate, the highest possible burden will be 5 respondents per state. The survey instrument is a 15-minute, voluntary telephone questionnaire covering approximately 30 questions. There are four open-ended questions. For those customers that request an opportunity to respond at greater length, follow-up calls will be scheduled. Since these conversations are voluntary, will vary greatly, and will affect a small percentage of respondents, the follow-up calls are not considered burdens under the definition of the Information Request.

This one-time only information collection will involve approximately 285 voluntary respondents of which 70% are anticipated to complete the telephone survey. The survey will require approximately 50 hours at a total cost to the respondents of \$1,448. Exhibit I-a, Respondent Burden and Costs, provides a detailed description of the unit burden and costs to respondents for this collection. The average burden per response is 15 minutes.

State grant program authorities are the only respondent group that will be affected by this survey, and by definition they are not small governmental jurisdictions.

#### **Use of Survey Results**

The results of the Customer Satisfaction Survey will be summarized in a report or accompanying briefing document. EPA intends to use the information gathered by the survey to identify tools to improve the grants management process by reducing paperwork, focusing on results while maintaining accountability, and responding to State environmental priorities. The fundamental purpose of the customer satisfaction survey is to assess states satisfaction with the grant process and existing services. The survey will help EPA:

- S Identify potential changes that states would like to see in the administrative management of Sections 106, 319, and 604 (b) grant programs;
- S Assess the three grant programs’ potential to enhance/retard state adoption with the watershed protection approach; and
- S Understand state level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the three grant programs.

## Sample #2 - continued

### **Collection Schedule and Follow-up Plans**

EPA seeks to minimize the amount of data Collected through a one-time only data gathering effort while at the same time gathering enough information for an effective Customer Satisfaction Survey. The survey will help Headquarters establish a benchmark to compare EPA's customer service performance with that of other federal agencies and private sector businesses. In the future, this information will help to provide customers with choices in both the sources of service and the means of delivery; to make information, services, and complaint systems easily accessible; and to provide a means to address customer complaints.

### **Costs and Burden to the Agency and Respondents, and Number of Respondents**

The total burden for EPA Regional and State grants program authorities is a function of the number of grants managers, auditors and program managers for Sections 106, 319 and 604(b) of the Clean Water Act in each state and interstate agency and the number of open-ended questions. Exhibits 1-a and 1-b give detailed descriptions of the individual reporting and record keeping requirements associated with the survey. Burden estimates are based on EPA data from the Regions and Headquarters.

Exhibit 1-a summarizes the state respondents' burden and costs as respondents to the voluntary telephone survey. The total respondent burden associated with the Customer Satisfaction Survey is 50 hours (200 respondents at 15 minutes per call) and the total respondent cost is \$1,448, which equates to a cost per respondent of \$7.24. This estimate assumes that the average hourly labor cost for state employees is \$28.96, comparable to a GS9, Step 10 salary.

The Agency's burden and cost arises from contacting appropriate regional program officers, and from reviewing, analyzing, and processing the data. The total annual Agency burden associated with the customer Satisfaction Survey is 100 hours. This assumes that the average hourly labor cost of federal employees is \$28.96, equal to a GS-9, Step 10 salary. The total annual Agency cost resulting from survey reporting and record keeping resulting from the customer survey is \$2,896.

**Exhibit I-a**  
**Respondent Burden and Costs**

Regulation Requirements	(A) Total # Respondents <sup>1</sup>	(B) # Responses <sup>2</sup>	(C) Composite hrs/respondent	(D) Total hours (B)*(C)	(E) Hourly labor costs <sup>3</sup>	(F) Total Cost (D)*(E)
Survey Reporting requirements (one-time only)						
Respond to telephone Customer Satisfaction Survey	285	200	0.25	50	\$28.96	\$1,448
Total Burden and Costs for all affected Respondents: <sup>4</sup>				50		\$1,448

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<sup>1</sup> Respondents include State grants managers, auditors, and program managers for Sections 106, 319, and 604 (b) in each of the 57 States and Territories.

<sup>2</sup> Assumes approximately five calls to each State and Territory and assumes 70% response rate.

<sup>3</sup> Hourly labor cost equals the annual salary for a GS-9 step 10 (37,651) times 1.6 (the benefits multiplication factor as listed in the June 1992 ICR Handbook) and divided by 2,080 of work hours per year).

<sup>4</sup> Numbers may not add due to rounding.

**Exhibit 1-b**  
**Agency Burden and Costs (As users of Data)**

<u>Regulation Requirements</u>	(A) Total no. of respondents	(B) No. of responses	(C) Composite hours per respondent	(D) Total hours (B) * (C)	(E) Hourly labor cost <sup>1</sup>	(F) Total Costs (D)*(E)
Recordkeeping Requirements (Ongoing)						
Agency Reviews 1 <sup>st</sup> Draft of Report	N/A	N/A	N/A	60	\$28.96	\$1,738
Agency Approves Final Draft of Report	N/A	N/A	N/A	40	\$28.96	\$1,158
Total Agency Burden and Costs: <sup>2</sup>				100		\$2,896

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<sup>1</sup>Hourly labor cost equals the annual salary for a GS-9 step 10 (\$37,651) times 1.6 (the benefits multiplication factor as listed in the June 1992 ICR Handbook) and divided by 2,080 of work hours per year).

<sup>2</sup> Numbers may not add due to rounding.

## Sample # 2 - continued

Draft - October 25, 1994  
**1994 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY**  
**HOW ARE WE DOING?**  
Grant Administration: Grant Administration Staff

Only a sample of the several versions of the surveys for a series of grants is presented.

Hello, may I please speak with (NAME FROM FACE SHEET)?

**RESPONDENT AVAILABLE**  
**RESPONDENT NOT AVAILABLE (SCHEDULE A CALL BACK)**

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ Of Abt Associates. We are conducting a customer satisfaction study for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) about three Office of Water program management grant programs. The study is voluntary and the answers that you give will be kept strictly confidential.

- 1) Are you familiar with the Section 106 grant program that funds the management of state water quality programs?

**YES** ..... 1  
**NO (SKIP TO QUESTION 14)** ..... 2  
**DO/REF (SKIP TO QUESTION 14)** ..... 3

- 2) I have some questions about the FY 94 grant cycle. How satisfied are you with the level of reporting burden under Section 106? Are you...

**Very satisfied (SKIP TO QUESTION 4)** ..... 1  
**Satisfied (SKIP TO QUESTION 4)** ..... 2  
**Dissatisfied** ..... 3  
**Very dissatisfied** ..... 4

- 3) What are the one or two most important changes you would like to see in Section 106 reporting requirements?

\_\_\_\_\_

- 4) Do you think EPA made good use of the FY 94 section 106 data you reported to them?

**Yes** ..... 1  
**NO** ..... 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Grants Administrators 1

- 5) Were any of the reports created by your state in complying with Section 106 requirements for FY 94 useful for other state purposes such as state budgeting or accounting?

**Yes** ..... 1  
**NO** ..... 2

- 6) How satisfied are you with the opportunity offered by EPA to file Section 106 FY 94 reports electronically? Are you...

**Very satisfied (SKIP TO QUESTION 8)** ..... 1  
**Satisfied (SKIP TO QUESTION 8)** ..... 2  
**Dissatisfied** ..... 3  
**Very dissatisfied** ..... 4





7) What are the one or two most important changes you would like to see in Section 106 electronic reporting scope or procedures?

\_\_\_\_\_

8) How satisfied were you with the length of time it took EPA to respond to requests for information on grant administration and reporting for FY 94 Section 106 grants? Were you...

**Very satisfied** ..... 1  
**Satisfied** ..... 2  
**Dissatisfied** ..... 3  
**Very dissatisfied, or** ..... 4  
**Did you not make any requests for information** ..... 5

9) How satisfied are you with the length of time it took to obtain the EPA approvals required at various states of administration of FY 94 Section 106 grants? Were you...

**Very satisfied** ..... 1  
**Satisfied** ..... 2  
**Dissatisfied** ..... 3  
**Very dissatisfied, or** ..... 4  
**Did you not need any EPA approvals** ..... 5

10) How satisfied are you with EPA's requirements for the close-out or rollover of the Section 106 grant fund? Are you...

**Very satisfied** ..... 1  
**Satisfied** ..... 2  
**Dissatisfied** ..... 3  
**Very dissatisfied** ..... 4

Grants Administrators 2

11) What are the one or two changes you would most like EPA to make in its Section 106 reporting requirements?

\_\_\_\_\_

12) Overall, how satisfied are you with EPA's FY '95 Section 106 grant programs? Are you...

**Very satisfied** ..... 1  
**Satisfied** ..... 2  
**Dissatisfied** ..... 3  
**Very dissatisfied** ..... 4

13) What is the one most important change you would like to see made to the Section 106 grant program?

\_\_\_\_\_

Grants Administrators 3

**REPEAT FOR SECTION 319 AND 604(B)**

**INSERT THE FOLLOWING AFTER QUESTION 1 FOR 605(b)**

14) In meeting the reporting requirements for the Section 106, 319 and 604(b) programs for FY 94, did your state ever have to submit the same report the different grant programs?

**YES** ..... 1  
**No** ..... 2

15) Please compare your state's experience with the section 106, 319, and 604b programs for FY 95 with that of other grant programs administered by the EPA Office of Water.

\_\_\_\_\_

**CLOSING:** Thank you very much for your time. Analysts working on the project may contact you later for further detail or clarification of the information you've given. Is there a best time of day or day of the week to reach you?

\_\_\_\_\_

Thanks again, Goodbye.



**U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
APPLICANT PERMITTING SURVEY**

***Introduction:***

The attached survey is a follow-up to your recent permit application (or modification request) with the US EPA. We are interested in improving our permitting system, and we recognize that to do so, we need your frank input.

Problem areas that are identified will be followed up with focus groups to obtain more specific insights. While participation in this survey is voluntary, we encourage you to take this opportunity to help us improve the quality of our permitting processes.<sup>1</sup>

***Instructions:***

Please complete this survey by circling your answers and returning it in the postage-paid envelope provided. Most of the questions in this survey ask that you rate some aspect of US EPA's performance on the following scale: **"1" means you are very dissatisfied, and "6" means you are very satisfied.** If a question does not apply to your interaction with US EPA, please skip it and go on to the next question.

This survey is estimated to take an average of 10 minutes to complete.

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<sup>1</sup> The public reporting and recordkeeping burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response annually. Burden means the total time, effort, or financial resources expended by persons to generate, maintain, retain, or disclose or provide information to or for a Federal Agency. This includes the time needed to review instructions; develop, acquire, install, and utilize technology and systems for the purposes of collecting, validating, and verifying information, processing and maintaining information, and disclosing and providing information; adjust the existing ways to comply with any previously applicable instructions and requirements; train personnel to be able to respond to a collection of information; search data sources; complete and review the collection of information; and transmit or otherwise disclose the information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Send comments on the Agency's need for this information, the accuracy of the provided burden estimates, and any suggested methods for minimizing respondent burden, including through the use of automated collection techniques to the Director, OPPE Regulatory Information Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2136), 401 M Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460. Include the OMB control number in any correspondence. Do not send the completed survey to this address.

**U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
APPLICANT PERMITTING SURVEY**

Very Dissatisfied	Ver y Satisfied
1   2   3   4	5   6

1) Please identify to which permit media program your response to this survey applies: (you may check more than one, as appropriate, or, if your responses would appreciably differ for different program areas, please reproduce this form and submit one for each program area.)

- a) Air (   )
- b) Water (   )
- c) Hazardous Waste (   )
- d) Other (   ). Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

2) **Pre-application meeting/discussion:** These questions cover the pre-application discussion or meeting (i.e., a phone call or meeting) with US EPA to discuss the application process before you submitted the application.

- |   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| a) How satisfied are you with the availability of US EPA staff responding to your pre-application questions?  | 1   2   3   4   5   6 |
| b) How satisfied are you with the assistance provided by US EPA staff during the pre-application meeting/discussion?  | 1   2   3   4   5   6 |
| c) How satisfied are you with the usefulness of the information provided to you through the pre-application meeting/discussion?   | 1   2   3   4   5   6 |
| d) How satisfied are you that the US EPA staff provided suggestions or information to help minimize the overall permitting burden (e.g., as using pollution prevention opportunities to reduce emissions or identifying future needs now to minimize the need for modifications later)? | 1   2   3   4   5   6 |

3) **Permit Application Review and Determination:** These questions cover the time period from the submission of your permit application to US EPA's decision to either issue or deny the permit

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| a) How satisfied are you with the clarity of the permit application forms?                         | 1   2   3   4   5   6 |
| b) How satisfied are you with the clarity of the accompanying instructions or guidance?            | 1   2   3   4   5   6 |
| c) How satisfied are you with US EPA's timeliness in notifying that your application was complete? | 1   2   3   4   5   6 |

d) If you received any requests for supplemental information by the US EPA, how satisfied are you in the following areas?

1) clarity 1 2 3 4 5 6

2) timeliness of US EPA's request 1 2 3 4 5 6

3) relevance 1 2 3 4 5 6

e) How satisfied are you with US EPA's timeliness in determining the issuance or denial of your permit? 1 2 3 4 5 6

f) How satisfied are you with the clarity of the final permit decision? 1 2 3 4 5 6

4) **Overall satisfaction:** These questions cover your overall level of satisfaction with the manner which the permit process was handled by US EPA.

a) Overall, how satisfied are you with the way the permitting process was managed? 1 2 3 4 5 6

b) Overall, how satisfied are you that the US EPA permitting staff treated you in a courteous manner? 1 2 3 4 5 6

c) Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality and timeliness of the communications you have received from US EPA? 1 2 3 4 5 6

d) Overall, how satisfied are you that the US EPA permitting staff respond to your needs for guidance, information, or technical support under the permit process? 1 2 3 4 5 6

5) Would you like someone with the US EPA to contact you regarding this survey?

**Yes** \_\_\_\_\_ Please complete question 6

**No** \_\_\_\_\_ Please complete question 6 (optional). Your responses will be used by US EPA for informational purpose only.

6) Please provide the following information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town/City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

7) Please provide any other comments you would like us to consider: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

## U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY CITIZENS PERMITTING SURVEY

### *Introduction:*

The attached survey is a follow-up to your recent participation in a US EPA permitting action, through public comment or attendance at a US EPA hearing or meeting. We are interested in improving our permitting processes, and we recognize that to do so, we need your frank input.

Problem areas that are identified through the use of this survey will be followed up with focus groups to obtain more specific insights. While participation in this survey is voluntary, we encourage you to take this opportunity to help us improve the quality of our permitting process.<sup>1</sup>

### *Instructions:*

Please complete this survey by circling your answers and returning it in the postage-paid envelope provided. Most of the questions in this survey ask that you rate some aspect of US EPA's performance on the following scale: **"1" means you are very dissatisfied, and "6" means you are very satisfied.** If a question is not applicable to your interaction with EPA, please skip it and go on to the next question.

This survey is estimated to take an average of 10 minutes to complete.

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<sup>1</sup> The public reporting and recordkeeping burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 minutes per response annually. Burden means the total time, effort, or financial resources expended by persons to generate, maintain, retain, or disclose or provide information to or for a Federal Agency. This includes the time needed to review instructions; develop, acquire, install, and utilize technology and systems for the purposes of collecting, validating, and verifying information, processing and maintaining information, and disclosing and providing information; adjust the existing ways to comply with any previously applicable instructions and requirements; train personnel to be able to respond to a collection of information; search data sources; complete and review the collection of information; and transmit or otherwise disclose the information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Send comments on the Agency's need for this information, the accuracy of the provided burden estimates, and any suggested methods for minimizing respondent burden, including through the use of automated collection techniques to the Director, OPPE Regulatory Information Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2136), 401 M Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460. Include the OMB control number in any correspondence. Do not send the completed survey to this address.

**U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
CITIZENS PERMITTING SURVEY**

- |  | Very<br>Dissatisfied | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Very<br>Satisfied |
|--|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------|
|  |                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                 |
| <p>1) Please identify to which permit media program your response to this survey applies: (you may check more than one, as appropriate, or, if your responses would appreciably differ for different program areas, please reproduce this form and submit one for each program area.)</p> <p>a) Air ( )</p> <p>b) Water ( )</p> <p>c) Hazardous Waste ( )</p> <p>d) Other ( ). Please specify: _____</p> |                      |   |   |   |   |   |                   |
| 2) How satisfied are you with US EPA's notification to provide the public with the opportunity to comment in a timely manner?  |                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                 |
| 3) How satisfied are you with US EPA's method of notification to provide the public with the opportunity to comment in a convenient manner (e.g., by newspaper, radio, direct mailing or other preferred means)?   |                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                 |
| 4) How satisfied are you that US EPA provided clear and concise information about the permit process and application?  |                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                 |
| 5) How satisfied are you with the suitability of the public hearing/meeting location?  |                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                 |
| 6) How satisfied are you with the suitability of public hearing/meeting time?  |                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                 |
| 7) How satisfied are you that US EPA provided you opportunities to present your comments?  |                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                 |
| 8) How satisfied are you that US EPA presented the criteria that will be used for the permit decision?   |                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                 |
| 9) How satisfied are you with the quality of US EPA's response to your written or oral comment?  |                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                 |
| <p>10) <b>Overall satisfaction:</b> These questions cover your overall level of satisfaction with the manner which the permit process was handled by US EPA.</p> <p>a) Overall, how satisfied are you with the way the permitting process was managed?</p> <p>b) Overall, how satisfied are you that the US EPA permitting staff treated you in a courteous manner?</p>                                  |                      |   |   |   |   |   |                   |
|  |                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                 |
|  |                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                 |



c) Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality and timeliness of the communications you have received from US EPA?

1 2 3 4 5 6

d) Overall, how satisfied are you that the US EPA permitting staff respond to your needs for guidance, information, or technical support under the permit process?

1 2 3 4 5 6

11) Would you like someone with the US EPA to contact you regarding this survey?

**Yes** \_\_\_\_\_ Please complete question 12

**No** \_\_\_\_\_ Please complete question 12 (optional). Your responses will be used by US EPA for informational purpose only.

12) Please provide the following information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town/City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number:(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_

13) Please provide any other comments you would like us to consider, including changes to the permitting process:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

14) Please put an "x" next to the line in each category that best describes you:

\_\_\_I live near the facility/facilities requesting the permit(s).

\_\_\_I am employed by the facility requesting the permit.

\_\_\_I am employed by the local or state government in which the facility is located.

\_\_\_I am a member of a local environmental or community group.

\_\_\_I am a member of a regional or national environmental or community organization.

\_\_\_Other (Please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

## U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY DELEGATED AUTHORITY PERMITTING SURVEY

### *Introduction:*

The attached survey is being distributed to state, tribal and/or local governments that have been delegated or authorized to administer a permitting program under federal statutes administered by US EPA. We are interested in improving our permitting delegation/authorization and evaluation processes, and we recognize that to do so, we need your frank input.

Problem areas that are identified will be followed up with focus groups so that we may obtain more specific insights. Focus groups will include state and regional personnel and other stakeholders as appropriate. While participation in this survey is voluntary, we encourage you to take this opportunity to help us work better for all of our stakeholders.<sup>1</sup>

### *Instructions:*

Please complete this survey by circling your answers and returning it in the postage-paid envelope provided. Most of the questions in this survey ask that you rate some aspect of US EPA's performance on the following scale: **"1" means you are very dissatisfied, and "6" means you are very satisfied.** If a question does not apply to your interaction with US EPA, please skip it and go on to the next question.

This survey is estimated to take an average of 15 minutes to complete.

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<sup>1</sup> The public reporting and recordkeeping burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 minutes per response annually. Burden means the total time, effort, or financial resources expended by persons to generate, maintain, retain, or disclose or provide information to or for a Federal Agency. This includes the time needed to review instructions; develop, acquire, install, and utilize technology and systems for the purposes of collecting, validating, and verifying information, processing and maintaining information, and disclosing and providing information; adjust the existing ways to comply with any previously applicable instructions and requirements; train personnel to be able to respond to a collection of information; search data sources; complete and review the collection of information; and transmit or otherwise disclose the information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Send comments on the Agency's need for this information, the accuracy of the provided burden estimates, and any suggested methods for minimizing respondent burden, including through the use of automated collection techniques to the Director, OPPE Regulatory Information Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2136), 401 M Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460. Include the OMB control number in any correspondence. Do not send the completed survey to this address.

## DELEGATED AUTHORITY SURVEY

Very Dissatisfied				Very Satisfied	
1	2	3	4	5	6

- 1) Please identify to which permit media program your response to this survey applies: (you may check more than one, as appropriate, or, if your responses would appreciably differ for different program areas, please reproduce this form and submit one for each program area.)

- a) Air ( )
- b) Water ( )
- c) Hazardous Waste ( )
- d) Other ( ). Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

- 2) **Planning & Priority-Setting:** These questions cover your opinion of our planning and priority-setting prior to finalizing each annual permits program work plan or performance agreement. Please rate our performance on the following criteria:

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) How satisfied are you with US EPA conducting joint planning and priority-setting with you as an equal partner:  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| b) How satisfied are you with US EPA addressing state/tribal/local needs and specific circumstances in final agreements:   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| c) How satisfied are you with US EPA identifying areas where Federal technical assistance is needed:   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| d) How satisfied are you with US EPA's developing clear program elements (i.e., those that are mandatory for the delegated/authorized program):                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| e) How satisfied are you with US EPA's developing a permit delegation/authorization that is aligned with your state, tribal or local environmental strategic plan: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

- 3) **Technical Assistance:** These questions ask for your opinion of our performance in providing technical assistance to you, based on the following criteria:

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) How satisfied are you with the quality of the training we have provided to you:                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| b) How satisfied are you with the accuracy of our answers to your technical questions:                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| c) How satisfied are you with the timeliness of our answers to your technical questions:                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| d) How satisfied are you with our willingness to work with you creatively to solve difficult permitting problems: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

4) **Oversight:** These questions ask for your opinion of the Federal oversight conducted on individual permits:

- a) How satisfied are you that US EPA is conducting oversight consistent with the agreement, if an agreement is in place: 1 2 3 4 5 6
- b) How satisfied are you that US EPA is providing an appropriate amount of oversight: 1 2 3 4 5 6
- c) How satisfied are you with the clarity of the comments that were made: 1 2 3 4 5 6
- d) How satisfied are you with the appropriateness of the comments: 1 2 3 4 5 6
- e) How satisfied are you with the timeliness of the comments: 1 2 3 4 5 6
- f) How satisfied are you with US EPA's ability to provide comments which were helpful in maintaining or improving the quality of permit decisions: 1 2 3 4 5 6
- g) How satisfied are you with resolving issues that we have raised: 1 2 3 4 5 6
- h) If you were to recommend an improvement in the agreement, it would be that:  
\_\_\_ We should review fewer permits on a real-time basis  
\_\_\_ We should review more permits on a real-time basis  
\_\_\_ We should review only specific types of permits  
(If yes, which types?)  
\_\_\_ We should conduct permit reviews to help implement new programs  
\_\_\_ We should review permits only when requested by the authorized entity or other stakeholder

5) **Permitting Program Evaluation:** These questions concern our evaluation of your permitting program. Please rate our performance on the following:

- a) How satisfied are you that the delegation/authorization agreement meets your agency's permitting needs: 1 2 3 4 5 6
- b) How satisfied are you with our evaluation of your delegated/authorized permitting program in terms of:
1. Accuracy: 1 2 3 4 5 6
2. Identification of accomplishments: 1 2 3 4 5 6
3. Identification of opportunities for improvement: 1 2 3 4 5 6
4. Resolution of disagreements: 1 2 3 4 5 6
5. Suggestions for program improvements: 1 2 3 4 5 6

6. Your overall performance:

1 2 3 4 5 6

- 6) **Keeping you informed**: This question covers our communication with you regarding real or potential changes to permitting regulations, process or delegations/ authorizations, and providing you the opportunity to comment on them. Please rate our performance on the following criteria:

- a) How satisfied are you with the timeliness of US EPA's notification of the opportunity to comment:

1 2 3 4 5 6

- b) How satisfied are you with the convenience of the method of comment (e.g., in writing, through meetings, etc.):

1 2 3 4 5 6

- c) How satisfied are you with US EPA providing information about real or potential changes to the permitting relationship in an understandable manner:

1 2 3 4 5 6

- d) How satisfied are you with our responsiveness to your comments:

1 2 3 4 5 6

- 7) **Trust and Fairness**: These questions concern your opinion of how well we manage the delegation of authority:

- a) How satisfied are you with the timeliness of US EPA's responsiveness to your request for delegation/authorization:

1 2 3 4 5 6

- b) How satisfied are you with US EPA providing valuable review and comments on your request for delegation/authorization:

1 2 3 4 5 6

- 8) If delegation/authorization occurred in the last 3 years, How satisfied are you with the delegation process overall:

1 2 3 4 5 6

- 9) Please provide the following information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town/City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number:(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_

- 10) Please provide any other comments you would like us to consider: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.